Empower Girls.
Period.

Huru International
Country: Kenya

Evidence for Interventions
Huru International

Began in 2008 to address the menstrual and health needs of girls and young women, while providing local employment to produce re-usable sanitary pads.

Missing school greatly increases a girl’s vulnerability to sexual exploitation and adult poverty.

Huru Kits are distributed to increase school attendance and prevent thousands of new HIV infections each year. Kits are made in a workshop located in a slum in Nairobi.

Huru has distributed 80,000 kits to date.
Huru Kits

Made in Kenya with local materials.

Each kit includes:

- 8 Menstrual Pads – 5 day pads and 3 overnight pads
- 3 pairs of underwear
- A waterproof Ziploc Bag – for carrying the pads
- A bar of washing soap – to clean the pads
- Educational booklet on menstruation, puberty, sexual health and care of Huru re-usable sanitary pads
- Packaged in a backpack

Empower Girls. Period.

www.huruinternational.org
Why?

Girls who miss school regularly fall behind & are more likely to drop out early. Contributing to:

• Early pregnancy and marriage, risk for HIV infection
• Lower wage earning
• Gender inequity at home and in the community

Huru studies show an average of 30-40% of girls report missing days of school due to inconsistent supply or lack of pads for their periods. (Path 2012 baseline, EJAF 2012 baseline)

2012: Kenya Ministry of Education launched national sanitary pad intervention to address the national need for girls in school.

Empower Girls. Period.

www.huruinternational.org
MHM Intervention

1,000 girls from 3 slums in Nairobi targeted to receive Huru kits, education and referral to hotline.

- 7 institutions hosted 49 small group training sessions delivered over a 90 minute period.
- Institutions provided lists of potential beneficiaries, which are then screened
- 1,000 girls selected

Monitoring
- All completed baseline
- 263 completed endline
Monitoring Methods

1) Beneficiary assessment
   • Ensure referral is accurate
     ✓ Girl/young woman has her period
     ✓ Reports missing days of school due to lack of pads

2) Baseline questionnaire according to project objectives
   • Huru facilitated to large group of beneficiaries who fill out forms

3) Verify receipt of Huru kit with signature by each recipient

4) Six months after distribution complete an end line questionnaire using same method as above

5) Data analysis & report writing

Empower Girls. Period.
Monitoring Tools

• Standardized Huru quantitative tools - questionnaires at baseline and endline
  o Do you sometimes miss school during your periods, due to lack of pads?
  o How many days do you miss school each month because of lack of pads?
    ___ 1 day ___ 2-3 day’s ___ 4-5 days ___5 or more days
  o What other main reasons make you miss school during your periods?
    (1) Cramps  (2) Embarrassment/shame  (3) Other

• Project monitoring tools
  ✓ Track distribution content and kit receipt

• For other projects, have used:
  ✓ Detailed survey tools with external evaluators
  ✓ Monitoring forms for community events and attendance at educational sessions
  ✓ Recruitment cards
  ✓ School inquiry for head master/teachers for qualitative views and personal experiences
RESULTS MHM Objective 1: Reduced rates of absenteeism among project beneficiaries.

- School attendance increased dramatically, at each level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of days missed per month at baseline</th>
<th># of days missed per month at endline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 day: 37%</td>
<td>1 day: 12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 days: 26%</td>
<td>2-3 days: 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5 days: 25%</td>
<td>4-5 days: 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None: 12%</td>
<td>None: 80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Empower Girls. Period.

www.huruinternational.org
Why are 20% still missing days of school?

This could be attributed to the other reported reasons for missing school. They included: very painful cramps, other sickness and lack of school fees.

Other items suggested poverty at home:
- 5% of girls lack food
- 5% of girls lack space to sleep
- 9% have been exposed to abuse
- 8% have inadequate water supply
Use of Huru Kits Described

70% of beneficiaries reported that they received and used the kit for themselves (as instructed).

30% of beneficiaries still reported sharing pads at endline. An indication of the living situation, status of girls, need for pads and interest at home to try RSPs.

Of these:
• 23% shared with sisters
• 6% shared with their mother
• 1% shared with friends or neighbors
Huru Lessons about WASH in Schools

Observation and reports from school officials and beneficiaries show:

• A high pupil to toilet ratio especially in public primary schools; not enough toilets for use by high numbers.

• Short breaks between classes (not more than 30 minutes) so girls lack time to use few available facilities to change pads.

• Toilets often dilapidated, with the lower part of the doors worn out. Girls report feeling embarrassed/worried to be viewed during use.

• Lack of clean (leave alone running) water in close proximity to the toilets to wash hands before & after changing of pads.
Next Steps

• Families play a key role in providing support for girls during menstruation and when facing other challenges. Huru will work to empower families so that they can provide positive support to girls during their periods and help them face challenges posed by adolescence.

• Huru includes information on safe and low cost means of managing discomforts during periods but this should be covered more during the training sessions to avoid continued absenteeism.

• Improvement of sanitation/toilet facilities still needs to be addressed.

• Need for a longer-term intervention focused on information, education and communication to improve risk perception.
Thank you!